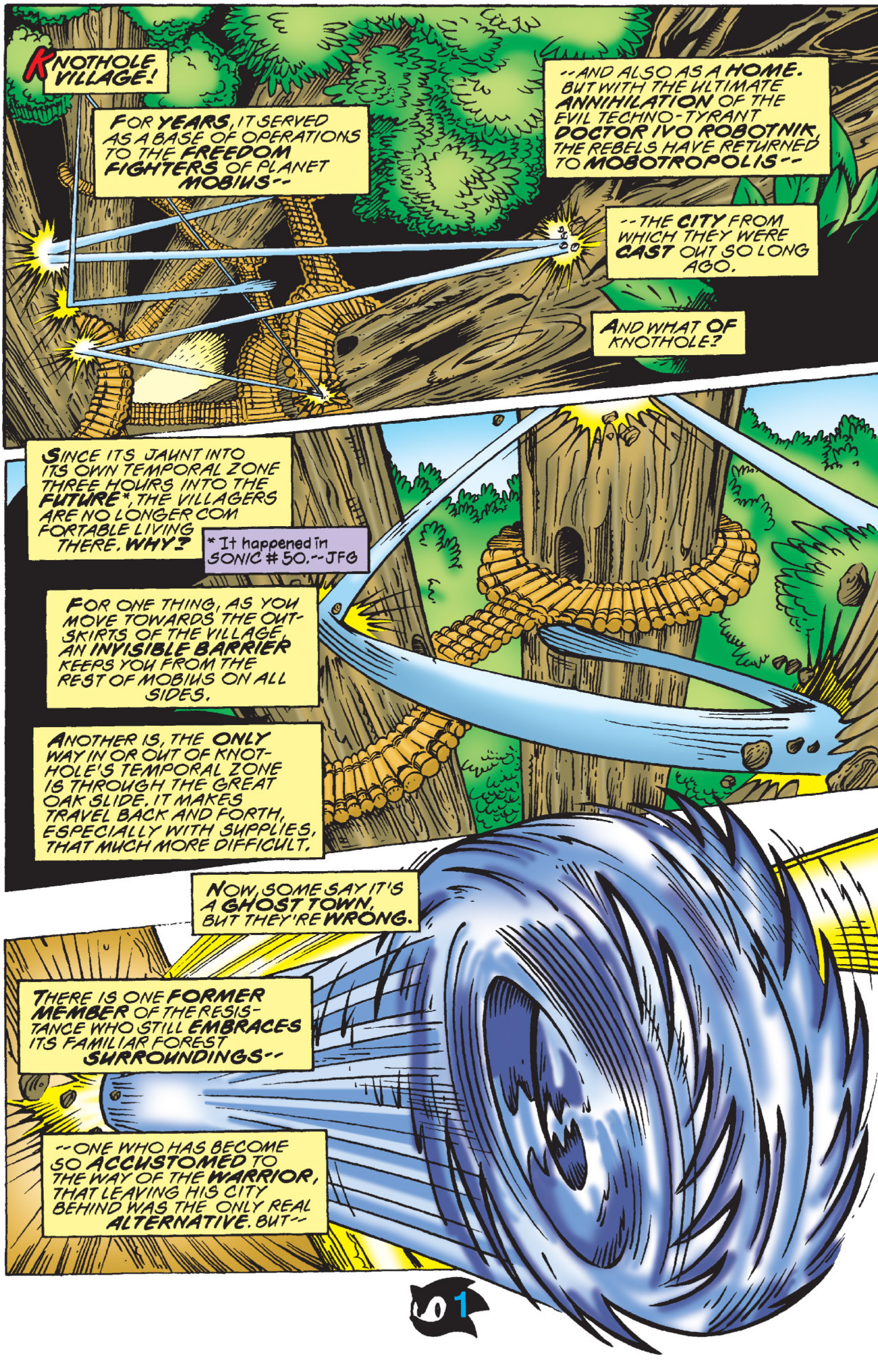
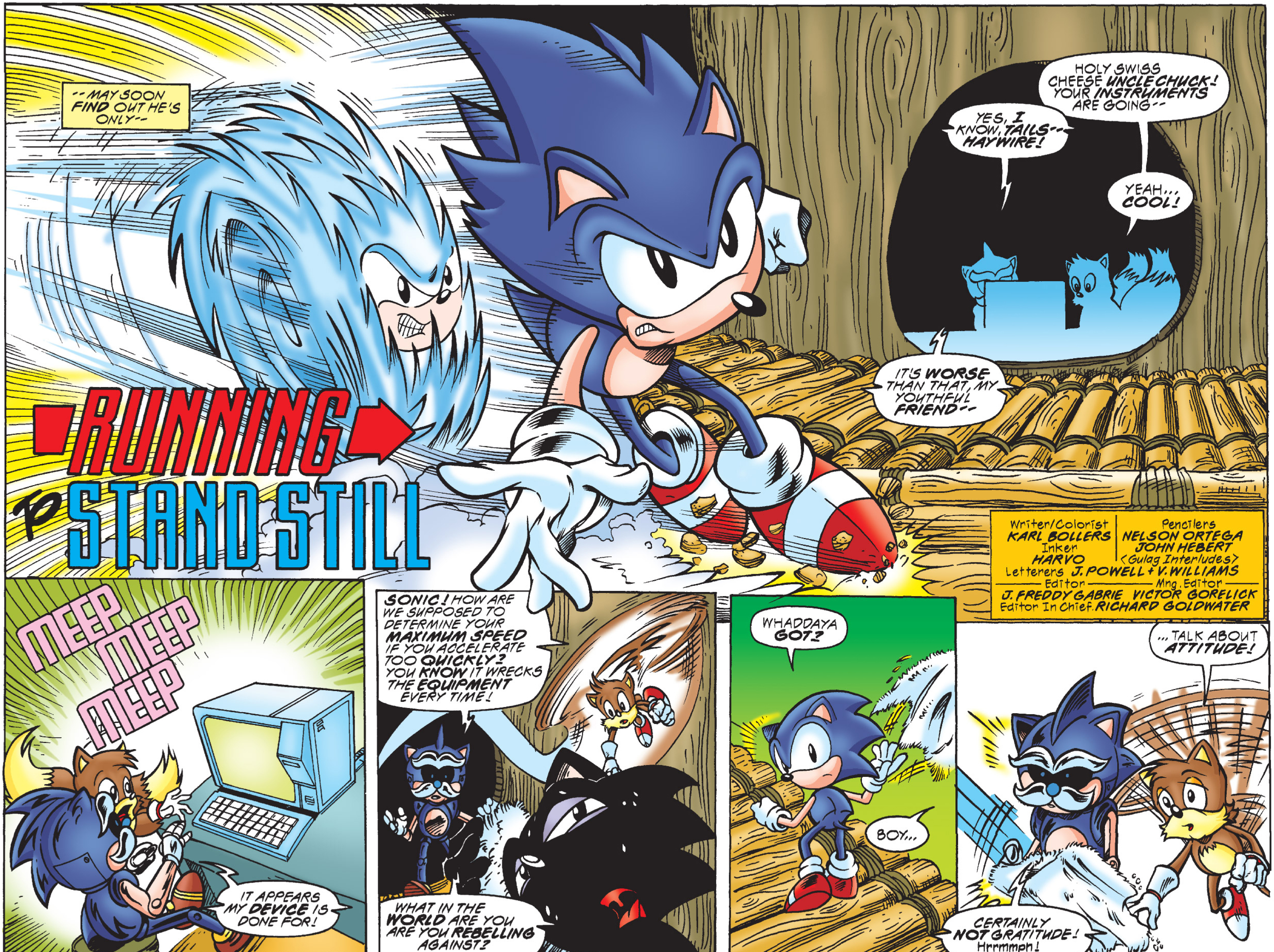
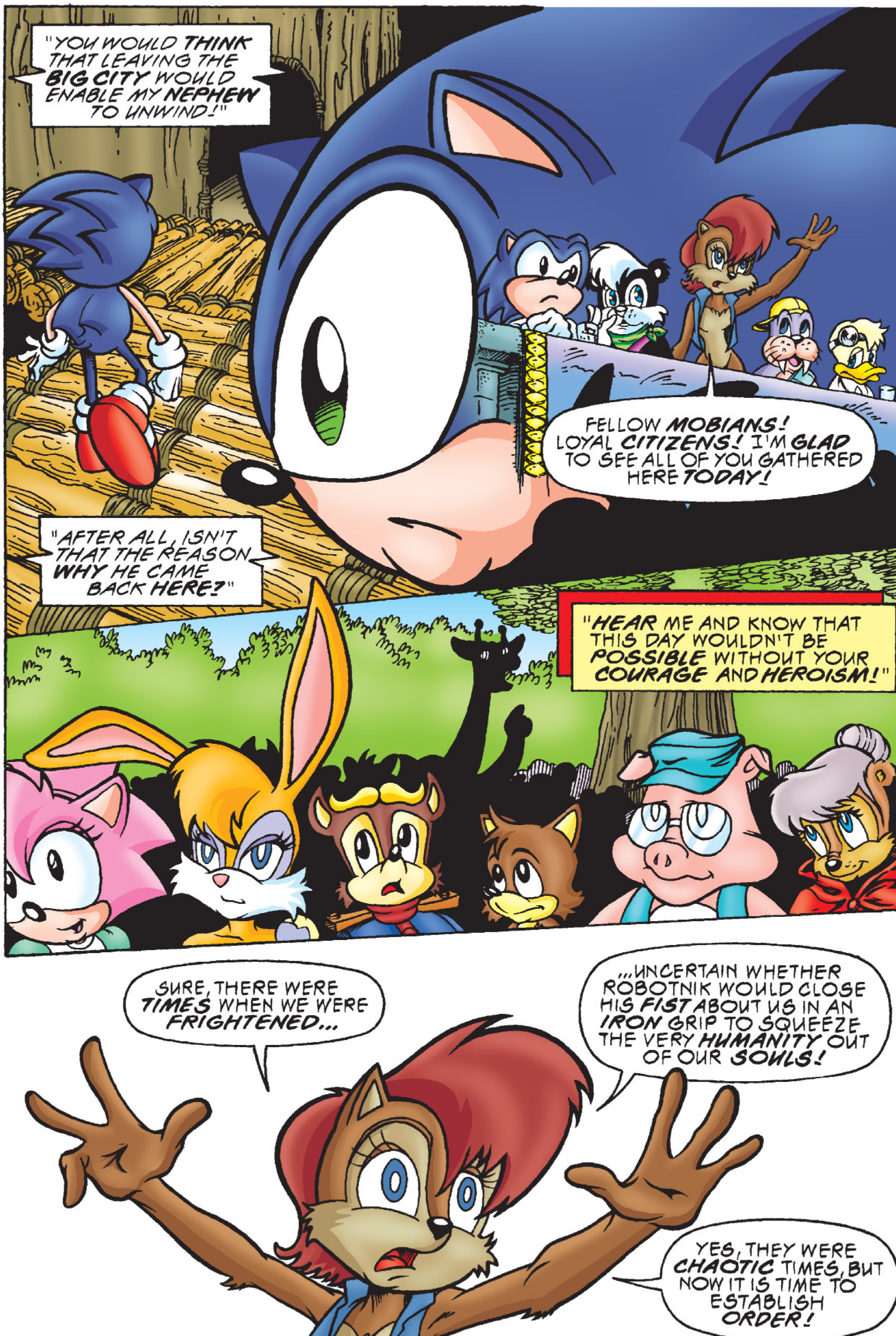


Archie
ADVENTURE SERIES
NO.54
JAN.
US$1.75
CAN$1.85
SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG
TM
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

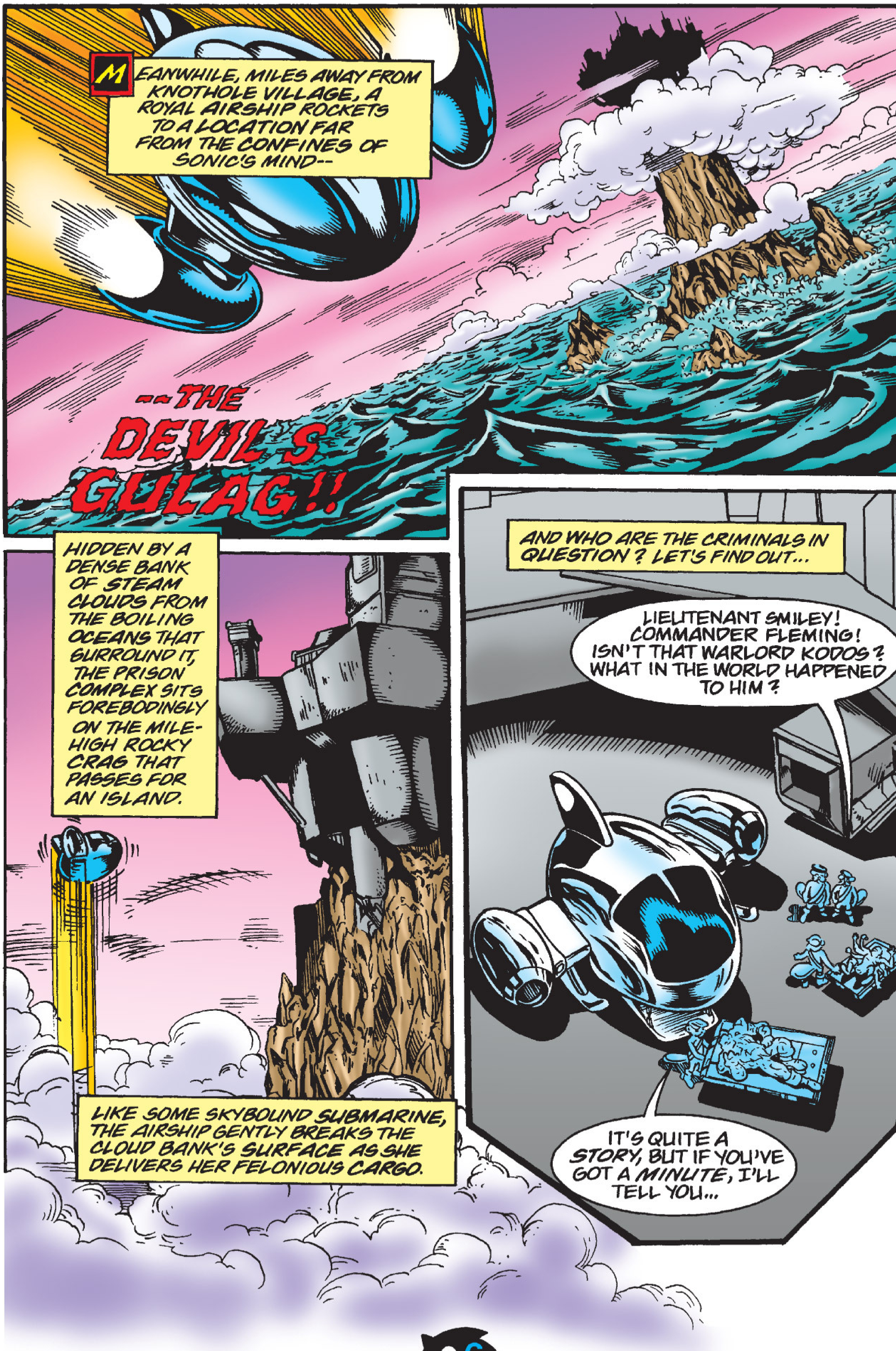


KNOTHOLE VILLAGE!
FOR YEARS, IT SERVED AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF PLANET MOBIUS--
--AND ALSO AS A HOME. BUT WITH THE ULTIMATE ANNIHILATION OF THE EVIL TECHNO-TYRANT DOCTOR IVO ROBOTNIK, THE REBELS HAVE RETURNED TO MOBOTROPOLIS--
--THE CITY FROM WHICH THEY WERE CAST OUT SO LONG AGO.
AND WHAT OF KNOTHOLE?
SINCE ITS JAUNT INTO ITS OWN TEMPORAL ZONE THREE HOURS INTO THE FUTURE*, THE VILLAGERS ARE NO LONGER COM FORTABLE LIVING THERE. WHY?
*It happened in SONIC #50.--JFG
FOR ONE THING, AS YOU MOVE TOWARDS THE OUT-SKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE, AN INVISIBLE BARRIER KEEPS YOU FROM THE REST OF MOBIUS ON ALL SIDES.
ANOTHER IS, THE ONLY WAY IN OR OUT OF KNOT-HOLE'S TEMPORAL ZONE IS THROUGH THE GREAT OAK SLIDE. IT MAKES TRAVEL BACK AND FORTH, ESPECIALLY WITH SUPPLIES, THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT.
NOW, SOME SAY IT'S A GHOST TOWN, BUT THEY'RE WRONG.
THERE IS ONE FORMER MEMBER OF THE RESIS-TANCE WHO STILL EMBRACES ITS FAMILIAR FOREST SURROUNDINGS--
--ONE WHO HAS BECOME SO ACCUSTOMED TO THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR, THAT LEAVING HIS CITY BEHIND WAS THE ONLY REAL ALTERNATIVE. BUT--

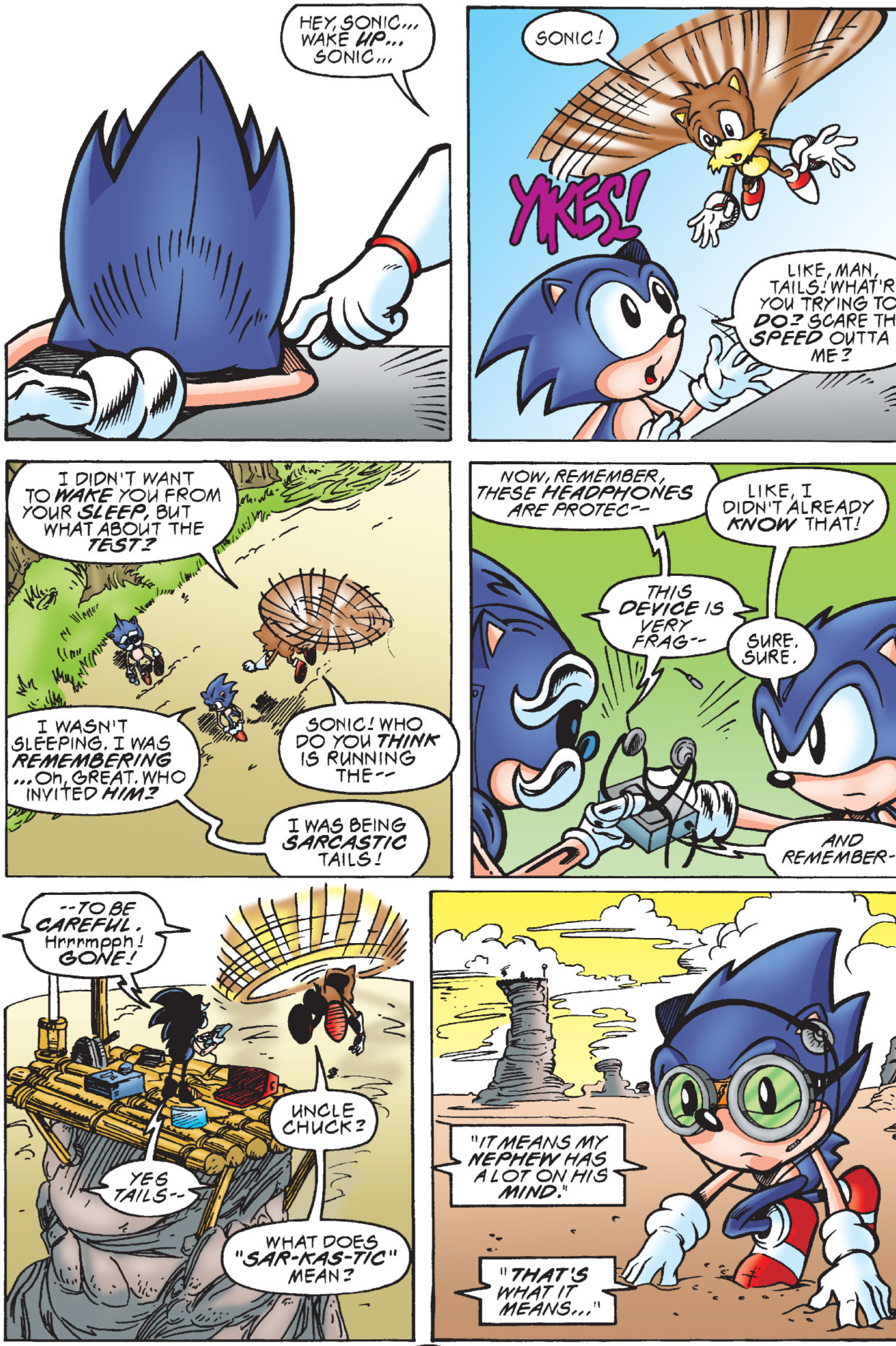

--MAY SOON FIND OUT HE'S ONLY--
RUNNING TO STAND STILL
HOLY SWISS CHEESE UNCLE CHUCK! YOUR INSTRUMENTS ARE GOING--
YES, I KNOW, TAILS-- HAYWIRE!
YEAH... COOL!
IT'S WORSE THAN THAT, MY YOUTHFUL FRIEND--
Writer/Colorist KARL BOLLERS
Pencilers NELSON ORTEGA JOHN HEBERT <Gulag Interludes>
Inker HARVO
Letterers J. POWELL + V. WILLIAMS
Editor J. FREDDY GABRIE
Mng. Editor VICTOR GORELICK
Editor In Chief RICHARD GOLDWATER
MEEP MEEP MEEP
IT APPEARS MY DEVICE IS DONE FOR!
SONIC! HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DETERMINE YOUR MAXIMUM SPEED IF YOU ACCELERATE TOO QUICKLY? YOU KNOW IT WRECKS THE EQUIPMENT EVERY TIME!
WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU ARE YOU REBELLING AGAINST?
WHADDAYA GOT?
BOY...
...TALK ABOUT ATTITUDE!
CERTAINLY NOT GRATITUDE! Hrrmmph!


"YOU WOULD THINK THAT LEAVING THE BIG CITY WOULD ENABLE MY NEPHEW TO UNWIND!"
FELLOW MOBIANS! LOYAL CITIZENS! I'M GLAD TO SEE ALL OF YOU GATHERED HERE TODAY!
"AFTER ALL, ISN'T THAT THE REASON WHY HE CAME BACK HERE?"
"HEAR ME AND KNOW THAT THIS DAY WOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR COURAGE AND HEROISM!"
SURE, THERE WERE TIMES WHEN WE WERE FRIGHTENED...
...UNCERTAIN WHETHER ROBOTNIK WOULD CLOSE HIS FIST ABOUT US IN AN IRON GRIP TO SQUEEZE THE VERY HUMANITY OUT OF OUR SOULS!
YES, THEY WERE CHAOTIC TIMES, BUT NOW IT IS TIME TO ESTABLISH ORDER!

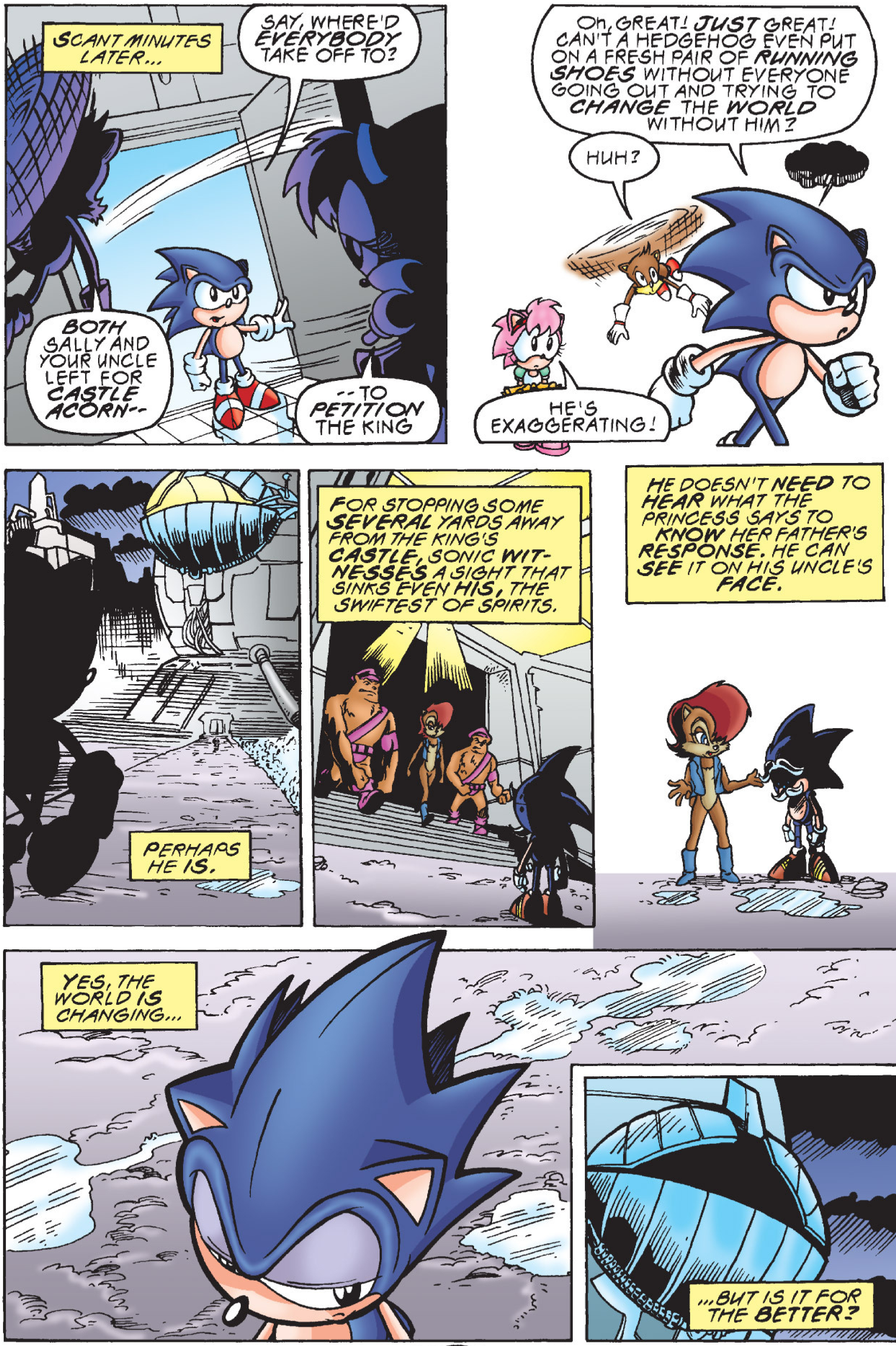

I GIVE YOU DOCTOR QUACK — OUR ROYAL PHYSICIAN — WHOSE HEALING SKILLS WILL HELP PUT OUR KINGDOM ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY...
... ROTOR — WHOSE TECHNOLOGICAL TALENTS CAN TURN ROBOTNIK'S WEAPONS OF WAR INTO ENGINES OF PROGRESS...
...GEOFFREY ST. JOHN — WHOSE OWN SENSE OF JUSTICE WILL SET THE STANDARD FOR THAT OF THE ENTIRE STATE...
... AND SONIC — WHOSE SPEED AND POPULARITY WILL ROUND OUT THE MEMBERSHIP OF A NEW COUNCIL...
...DEDICATED TO RESTORING ORDER!
HIP! HIP! HOORAY!
WE WILL NO LONGER BE KNOWN AS KNOTHOLE VILLAGERS! FROM TODAY ONWARDS WE SHALL BE MOBIANS OF MOBOTROPOLIS ONCE AGAIN. TOMORROW blah blah blah blah blah blah...



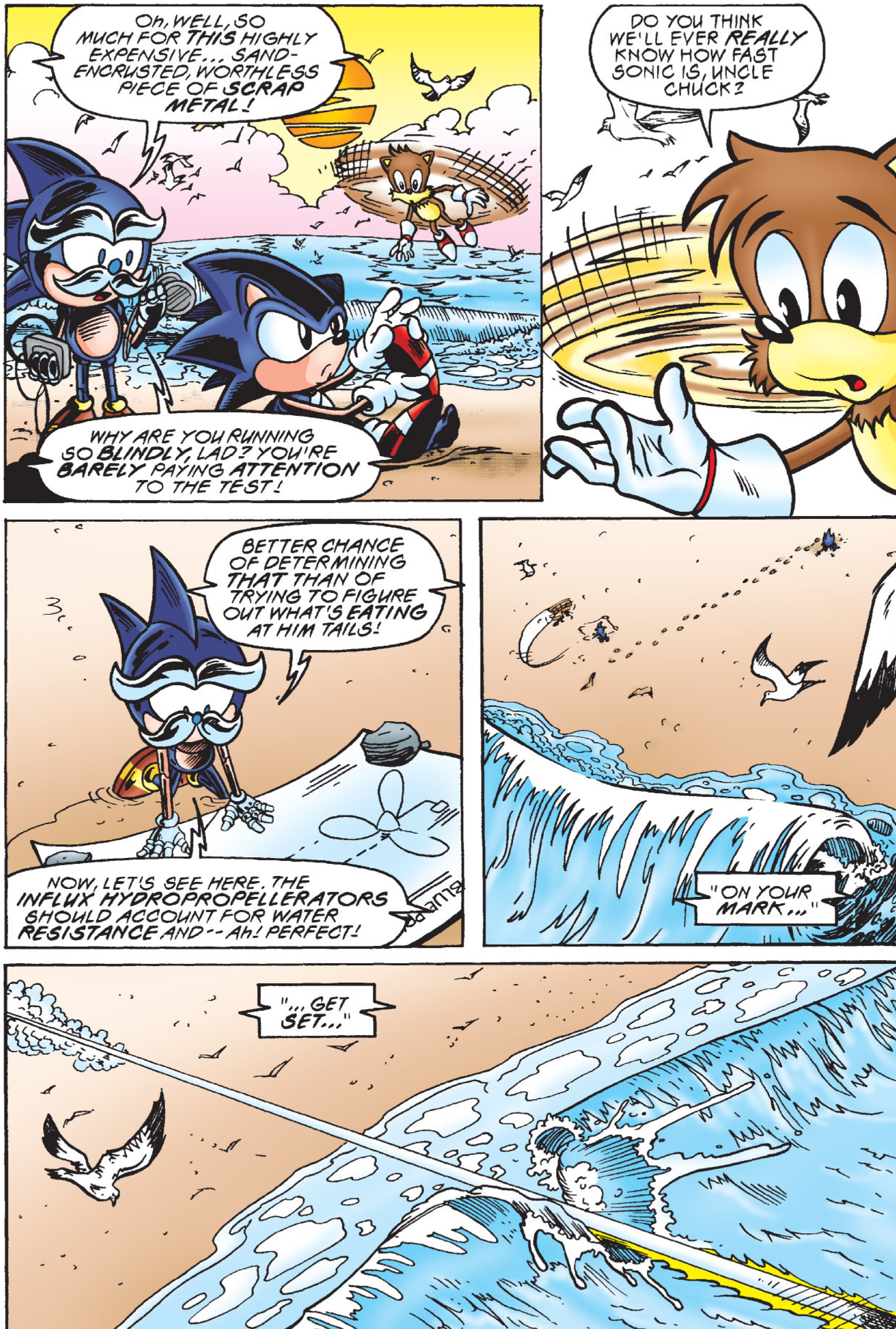
MEANWHILE, MILES AWAY FROM KNOTHOLE VILLAGE, A ROYAL AIRSHIP ROCKETS TO A LOCATION FAR FROM THE CONFINES OF SONIC'S MIND--
--THE DEVIL'S GULAG!!
HIDDEN BY A DENSE BANK OF STEAM CLOUDS FROM THE BOILING OCEANS THAT SURROUND IT, THE PRISON COMPLEX SITS FOREBODINGLY ON THE MILE-HIGH ROCKY CRAG THAT PASSES FOR AN ISLAND.
LIKE SOME SKYBOUND SUBMARINE, THE AIRSHIP GENTLY BREAKS THE CLOUD BANK'S SURFACE AS SHE DELIVERS HER FELONIOUS CARGO.
AND WHO ARE THE CRIMINALS IN QUESTION? LET'S FIND OUT...
LIEUTENANT SMILEY! COMMANDER FLEMING! ISN'T THAT WARLORD KODOS? WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPPENED TO HIM?
IT'S QUITE A STORY, BUT IF YOU'VE GOT A MINUTE, I'LL TELL YOU...


HEY, SONIC... WAKE UP... SONIC...
SONIC!
YIKES!
LIKE, MAN, TAILS! WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO DO? SCARE THE SPEED OUTTA ME?
I DIDN'T WANT TO WAKE YOU FROM YOUR SLEEP, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE TEST?
I WASN'T SLEEPING. I WAS REMEMBERING ...Oh, GREAT. WHO INVITED HIM?
SONIC! WHO DO YOU THINK IS RUNNING THE--
I WAS BEING SARCASTIC TAILS!
NOW, REMEMBER, THESE HEADPHONES ARE PROTEC--
LIKE, I DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW THAT!
THIS DEVICE IS VERY FRAG--
SURE. SURE.
AND REMEMBER--
--TO BE CAREFUL. Hrrrmpph! GONE!
UNCLE CHUCK?
YES TAILS--
WHAT DOES "SAR-KAS-TIC" MEAN?
"IT MEANS MY NEPHEW HAS A LOT ON HIS MIND."
"THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS..."

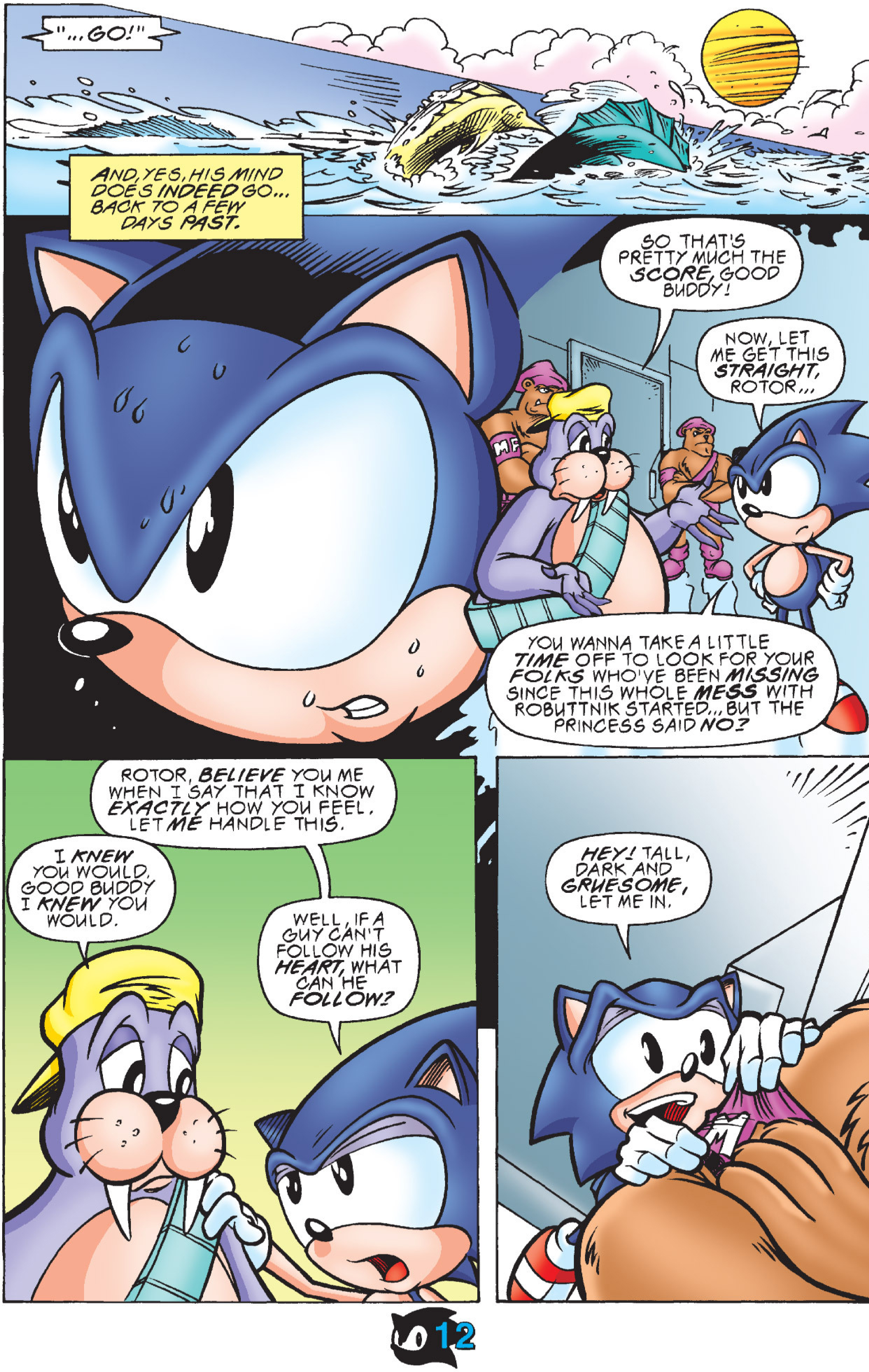

HE'S OFF! AND AS HE MAKES HIS WAY ACROSS THE GREAT PLAINS OF MOBIUS, AN AZURE FIGURE RACING AT HYPER SPEEDS--
--HIS MEMORY REEL HITS REWIND AND PAUSES IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT-PAST.
I'VE GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT, PRINCESS. THE DECISION WAS DIFFICULT TO MAKE, BUT I'VE DECIDED THAT ONLY YOU COULD HELP OUR PLIGHT.
I THINK YOUR IDEA IS BRILLANT!
SINCE MOBOTROPOLIS IS TOO CROWDED, KNOTHOLE WOULD BE THE IDEAL PLACE FOR THE ROBOT-ICIZED MOBIANS TO LIVE UNTIL WE FIND A WAY FOR EVERYONE TO LIVE IN HARMONY.
WOW! A REAL ROBOTVILLE, AMY!
THAT RULES COMPLETELY!
I'LL JUST HAVE TO OKAY THE MOVE WITH MY DAD.
DON'T SWEAT IT, UNC! KING ACORN IS A RIGHTEOUS MONARCH! IT'LL HAPPEN PDQ!*
I HOPE SO...
*Pretty Darned Quick! --Fast FREDDY

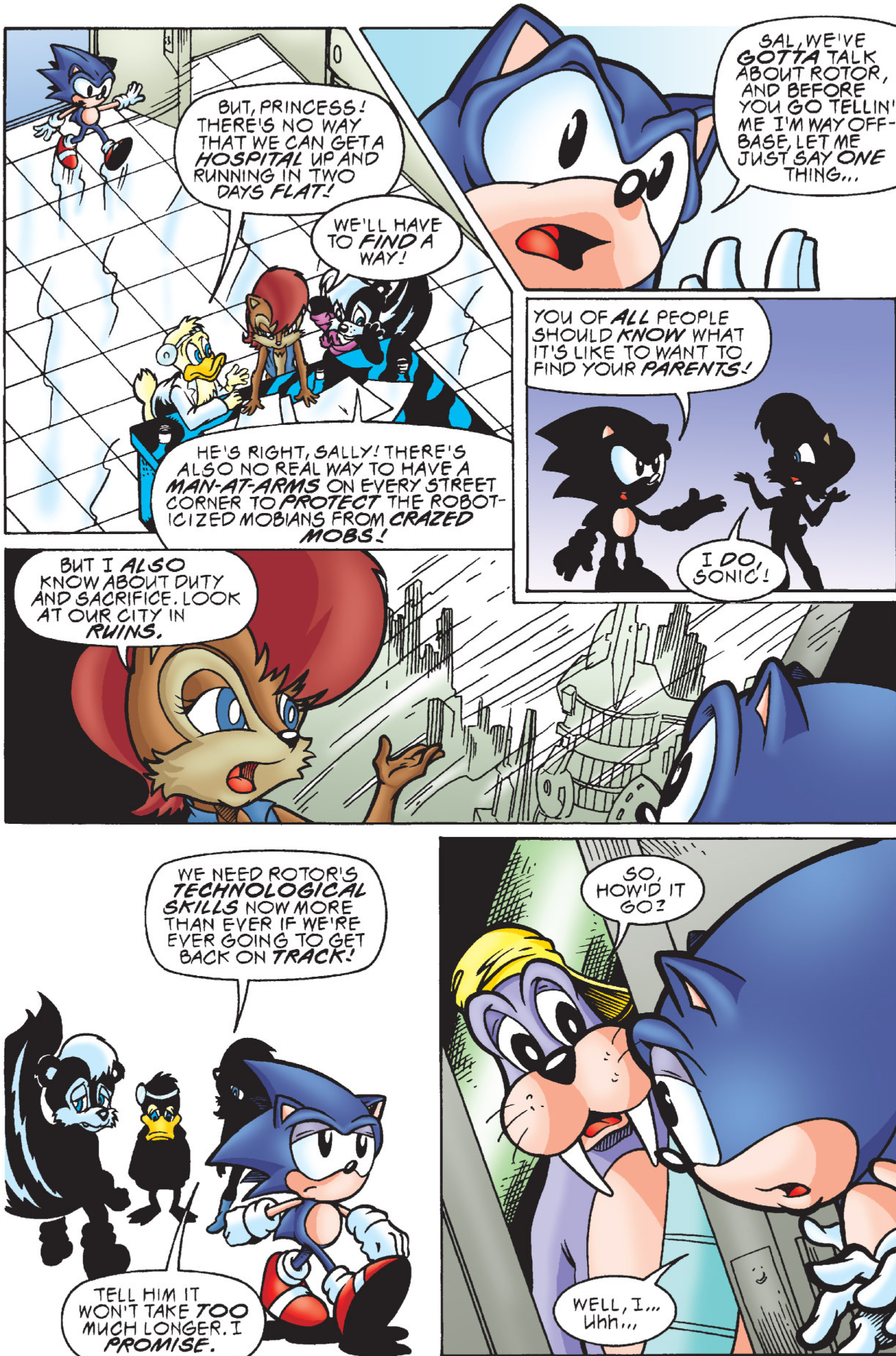

SCANT MINUTES LATER...
SAY, WHERE'D EVERYBODY TAKE OFF TO?
BOTH SALLY AND YOUR UNCLE LEFT FOR CASTLE ACORN--
--TO PETITION THE KING
Oh, GREAT! JUST GREAT! CAN'T A HEDGEHOG EVEN PUT ON A FRESH PAIR OF RUNNING SHOES WITHOUT EVERYONE GOING OUT AND TRYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD WITHOUT HIM?
HUH?
HE'S EXAGGERATING!
PERHAPS HE IS.
FOR STOPPING SOME SEVERAL YARDS AWAY FROM THE KING'S CASTLE, SONIC WITNESSES A SIGHT THAT SINKS EVEN HIS, THE SWIFTEST OF SPIRITS.
HE DOESN'T NEED TO HEAR WHAT THE PRINCESS SAYS TO KNOW HER FATHER'S RESPONSE. HE CAN SEE IT ON HIS UNCLE'S FACE.
YES, THE WORLD IS CHANGING...
...BUT IS IT FOR THE BETTER?

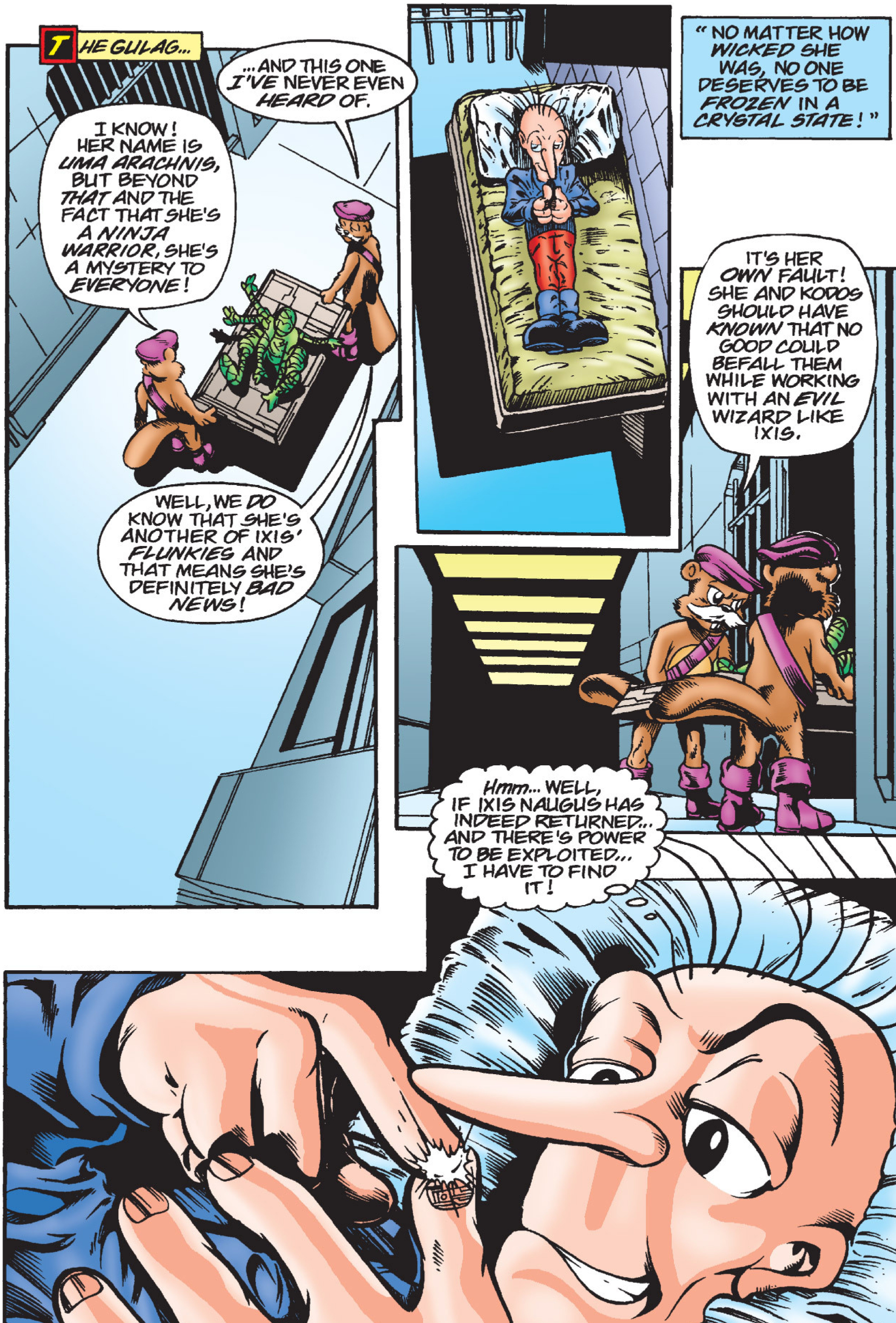

THE GULAG...
IT'S SO HARD TO BELIEVE IT EVEN AFTER BEING TOLD! HOW DID KODOS EVER MANAGE TO ESCAPE FROM THE ZONE OF SILENCE?
YOU HEARD THE LIEUTENANT...
"HE WAS A PAWN TO THE EVIL IXIS NAUGUS. WHEN IXIS ESCAPED THE ZONE, KODOS WAS FREED TOO."*
* SEE THE SOON-TO-BE-CLASSIC SONIC #53--J. FREDDY.
EH? WHAT'S THIS? IXIS NAUGUS? KING ACORN'S FORMER ROYAL WIZARD? RETURNED?
THIS IS THE MOST INTERESTING THING THAT'S HAPPENED SINCE THE BOSS WAS ULTIMATELY ANNIHILATED.
TELL OL' SMILEY MORE, YOU FLAT-TAILED FREAKS...

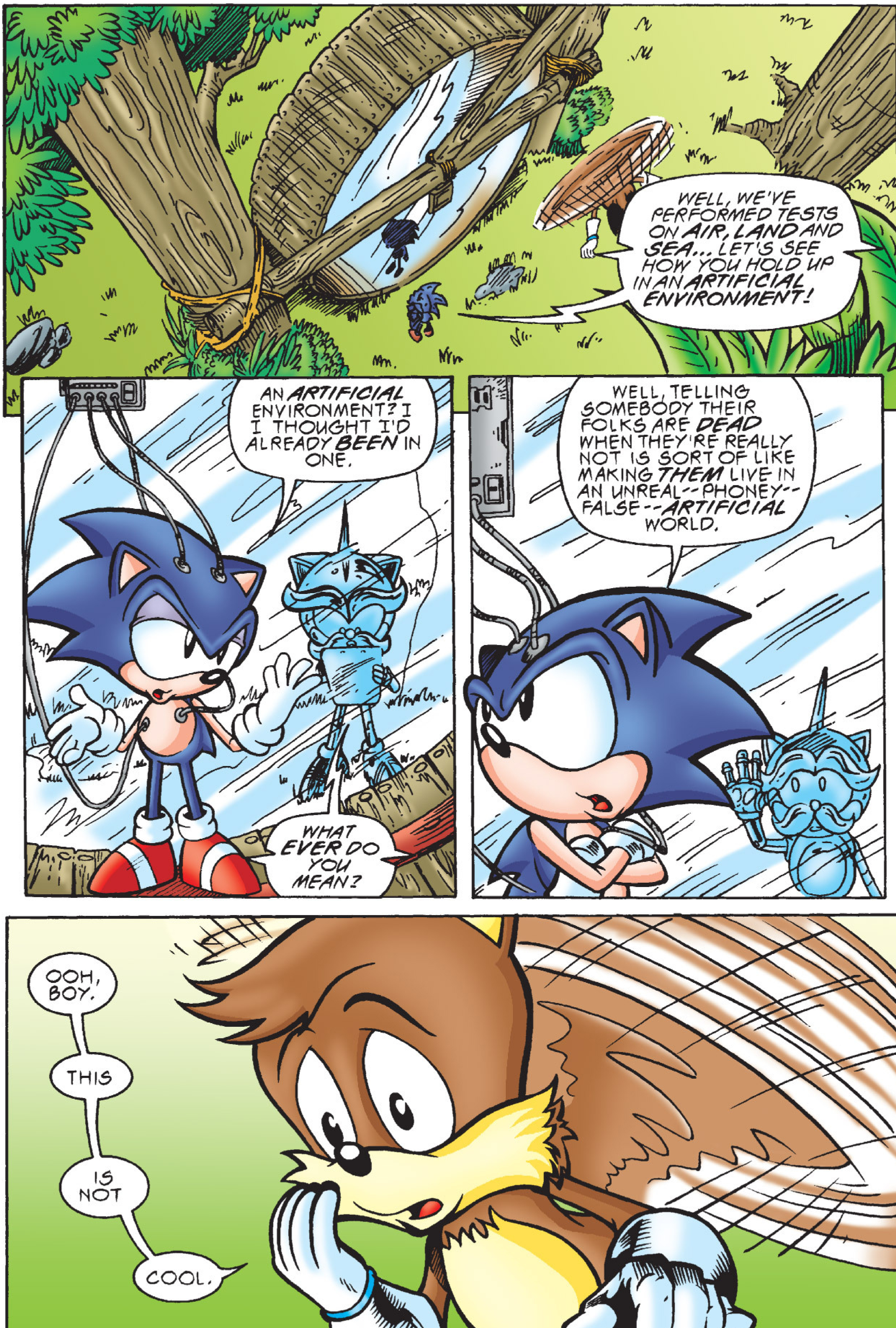


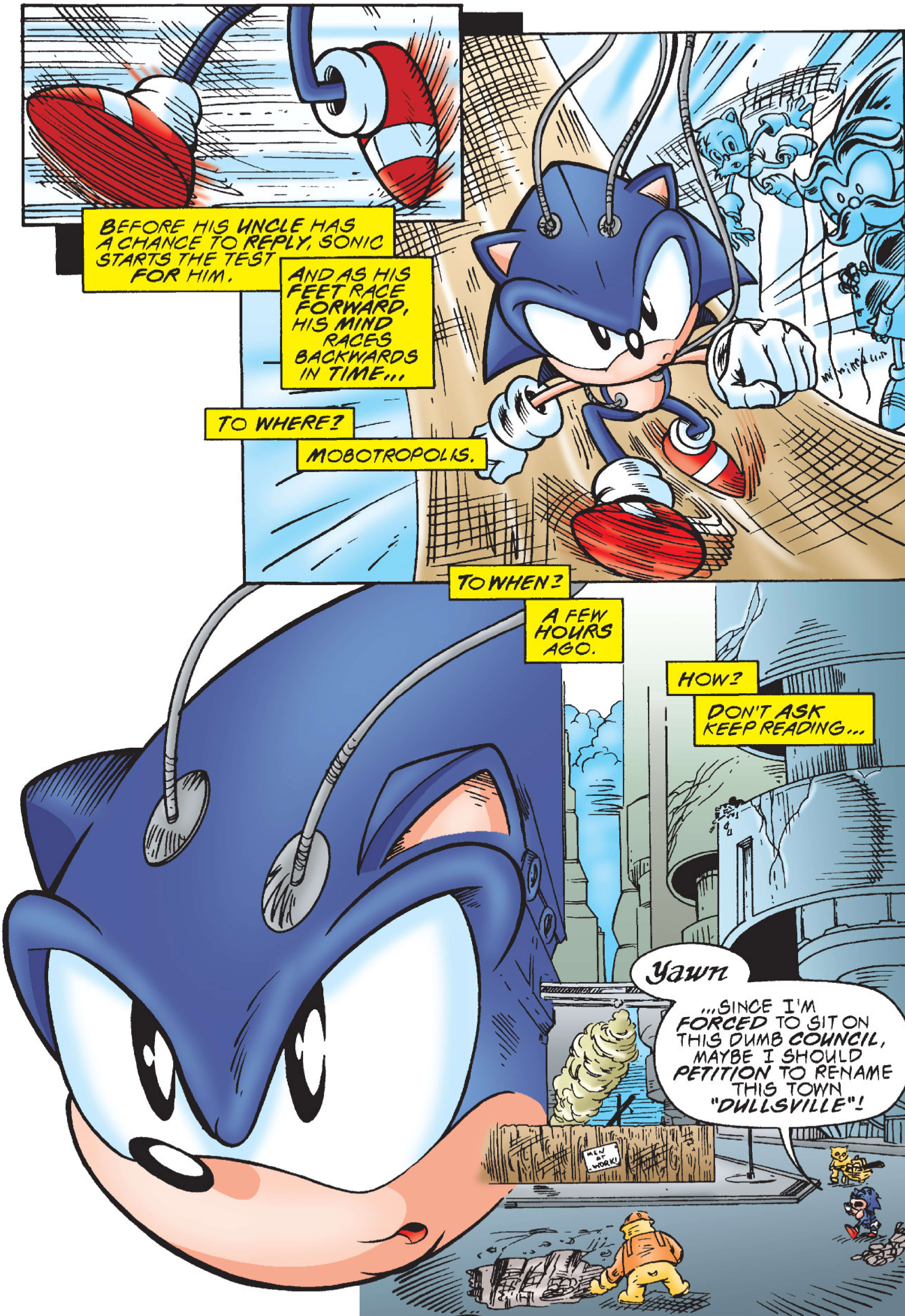
Oh, WELL, SO MUCH FOR THIS HIGHLY EXPENSIVE... SAND-ENCRUSTED, WORTHLESS PIECE OF SCRAP METAL!
WHY ARE YOU RUNNING SO BLINDLY, LAD? YOU'RE BARELY PAYING ATTENTION TO THE TEST!
DO YOU THINK WE'LL EVER REALLY KNOW HOW FAST SONIC IS, UNCLE CHUCK?
BETTER CHANCE OF DETERMINING THAT THAN OF TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S EATING AT HIM TAILS!
NOW, LET'S SEE HERE. THE INFLUX HYDROPROPELLERATORS SHOULD ACCOUNT FOR WATER RESISTANCE AND -- Ah! PERFECT!
"ON YOUR MARK..."
"...GET SET..."


"...GO!"
AND, YES, HIS MIND DOES INDEED GO... BACK TO A FEW DAYS PAST.
SO THAT'S PRETTY MUCH THE SCORE, GOOD BUDDY!
NOW, LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT, ROTOR...
YOU WANNA TAKE A LITTLE TIME OFF TO LOOK FOR YOUR FOLKS WHO'VE BEEN MISSING SINCE THIS WHOLE MESS WITH ROBUTTNIK STARTED... BUT THE PRINCESS SAID NO?
ROTOR, BELIEVE YOU ME WHEN I SAY THAT I KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU FEEL. LET ME HANDLE THIS.
I KNEW YOU WOULD, GOOD BUDDY. I KNEW YOU WOULD.
WELL, IF A GUY CAN'T FOLLOW HIS HEART, WHAT CAN HE FOLLOW?
HEY! TALL, DARK AND GRUESOME, LET ME IN.

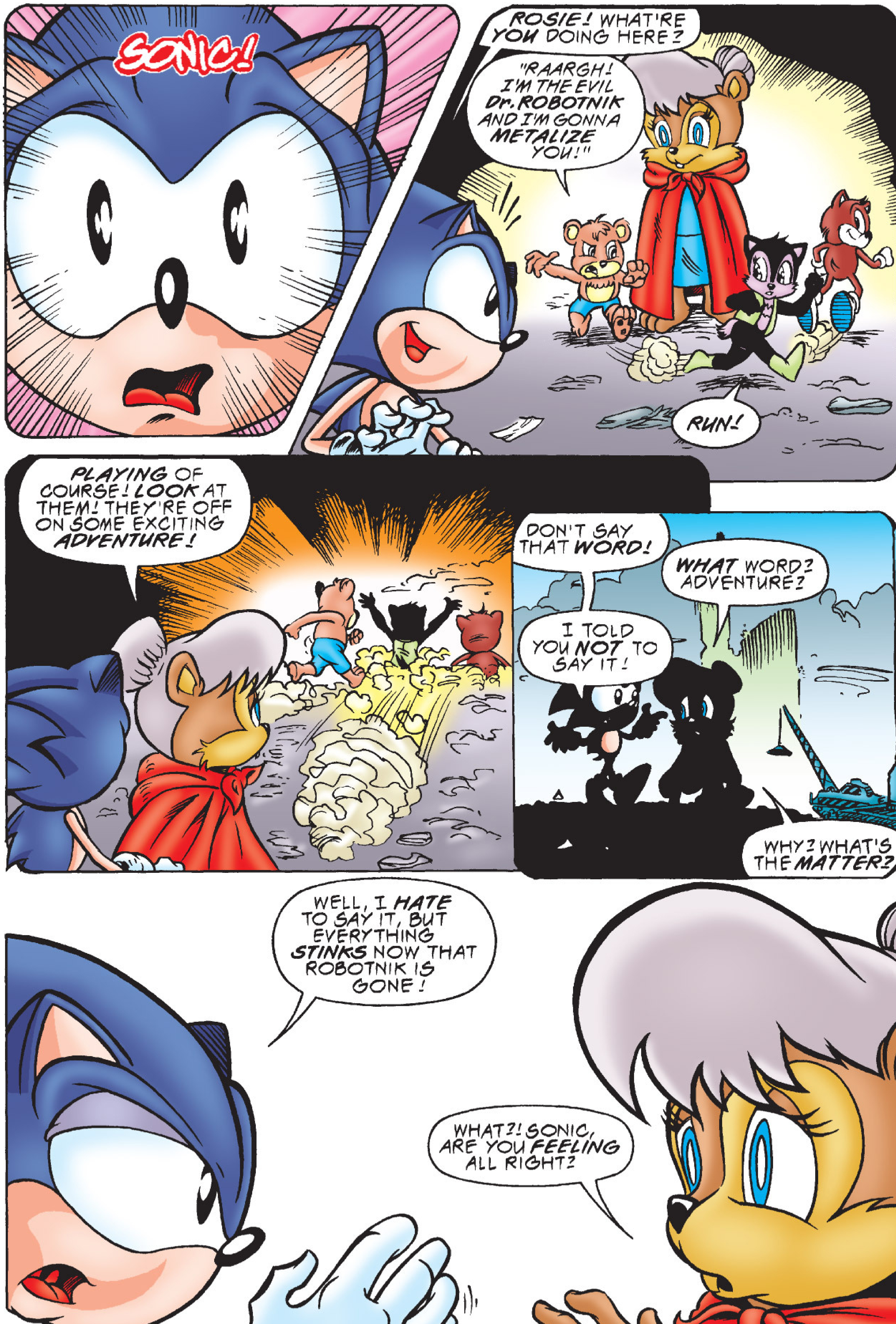

BUT, PRINCESS! THERE'S NO WAY THAT WE CAN GET A HOSPITAL UP AND RUNNING IN TWO DAYS FLAT!
WE'LL HAVE TO FIND A WAY!
HE'S RIGHT, SALLY! THERE'S ALSO NO REAL WAY TO HAVE A MAN-AT-ARMS ON EVERY STREET CORNER TO PROTECT THE ROBOTICIZED MOBIANS FROM CRAZED MOBS!
SAL, WE'VE GOTTA TALK ABOUT ROTOR, AND BEFORE YOU GO TELLIN' ME I'M WAY OFF-BASE, LET ME JUST SAY ONE THING...
YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO WANT TO FIND YOUR PARENTS!
I DO, SONIC!
BUT I ALSO KNOW ABOUT DUTY AND SACRIFICE. LOOK AT OUR CITY IN RUINS.
WE NEED ROTOR'S TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS NOW MORE THAN EVER IF WE'RE EVER GOING TO GET BACK ON TRACK!
TELL HIM IT WON'T TAKE TOO MUCH LONGER. I PROMISE.
SO, HOW'D IT GO?
WELL, I... UHH...

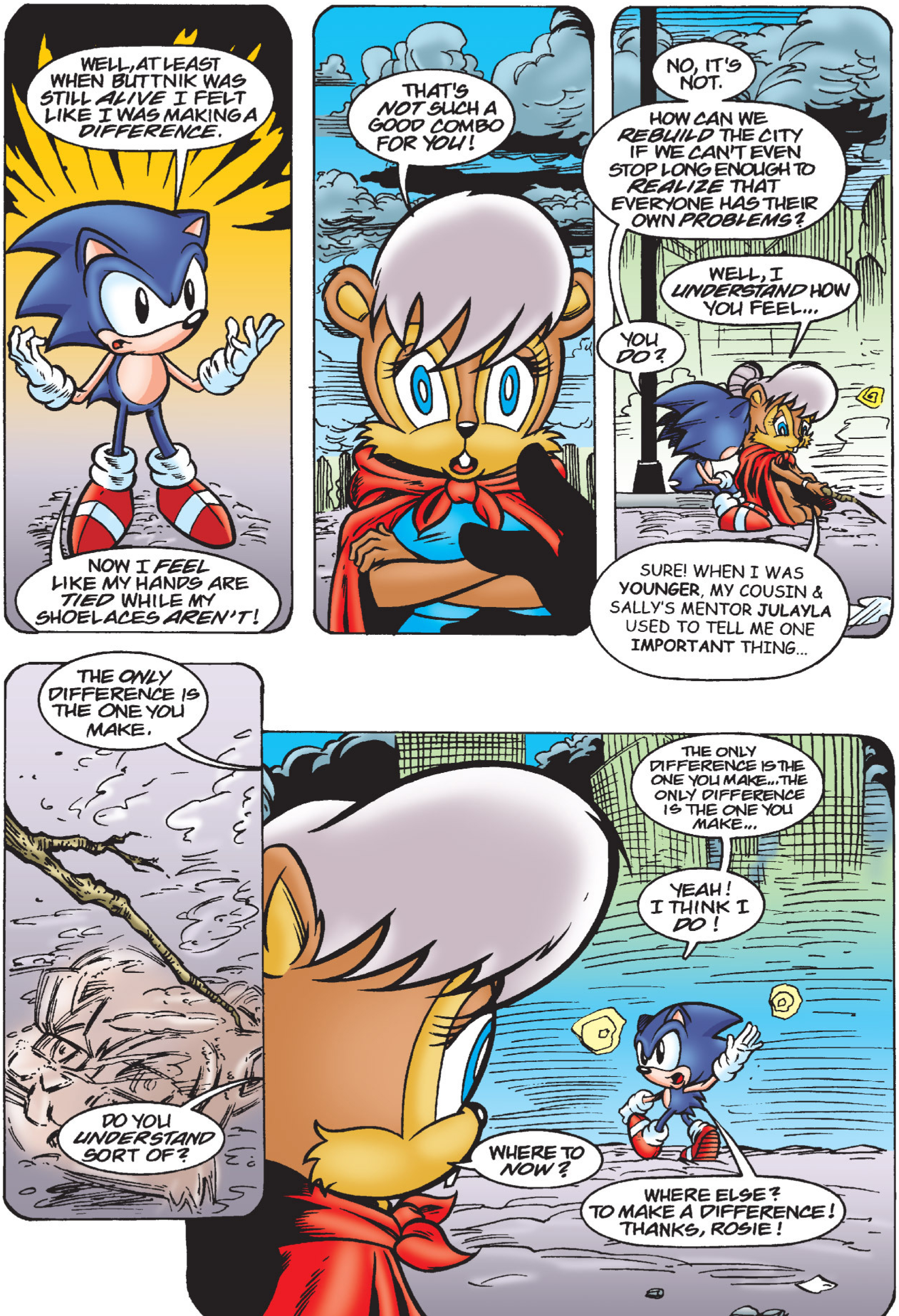

THE GULAG...
...AND THIS ONE I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF.
I KNOW! HER NAME IS UMA ARACHNIS, BUT BEYOND THAT AND THE FACT THAT SHE'S A NINJA WARRIOR, SHE'S A MYSTERY TO EVERYONE!
WELL, WE DO KNOW THAT SHE'S ANOTHER OF IXIS' FLUNKIES AND THAT MEANS SHE'S DEFINITELY BAD NEWS!
" NO MATTER HOW WICKED SHE WAS, NO ONE DESERVES TO BE FROZEN IN A CRYSTAL STATE! "
IT'S HER OWN FAULT! SHE AND KODOS SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT NO GOOD COULD BEFALL THEM WHILE WORKING WITH AN EVIL WIZARD LIKE IXIS.
Hmm... WELL, IF IXIS NAUGUS HAS INDEED RETURNED... AND THERE'S POWER TO BE EXPLOITED... I HAVE TO FIND IT!

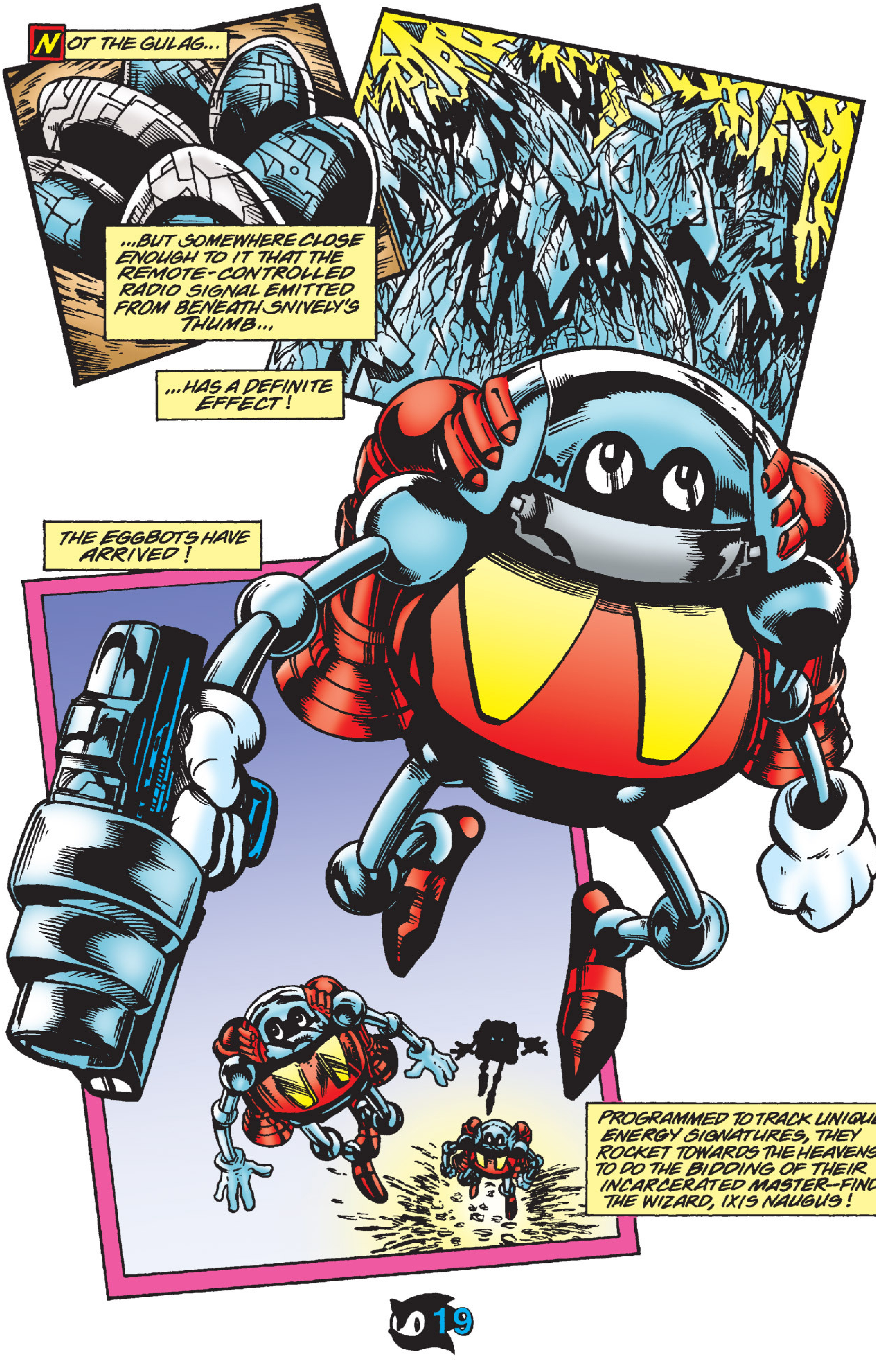

WELL, WE'VE PERFORMED TESTS ON AIR, LAND AND SEA... LET'S SEE HOW YOU HOLD UP IN AN ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENT!
AN ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENT? I I THOUGHT I'D ALREADY BEEN IN ONE.
WHAT EVER DO YOU MEAN?
WELL, TELLING SOMEBODY THEIR FOLKS ARE DEAD WHEN THEY'RE REALLY NOT IS SORT OF LIKE MAKING THEM LIVE IN AN UNREAL--PHONEY--FALSE--ARTIFICIAL WORLD.
OOH, BOY.
THIS
IS NOT
COOL.

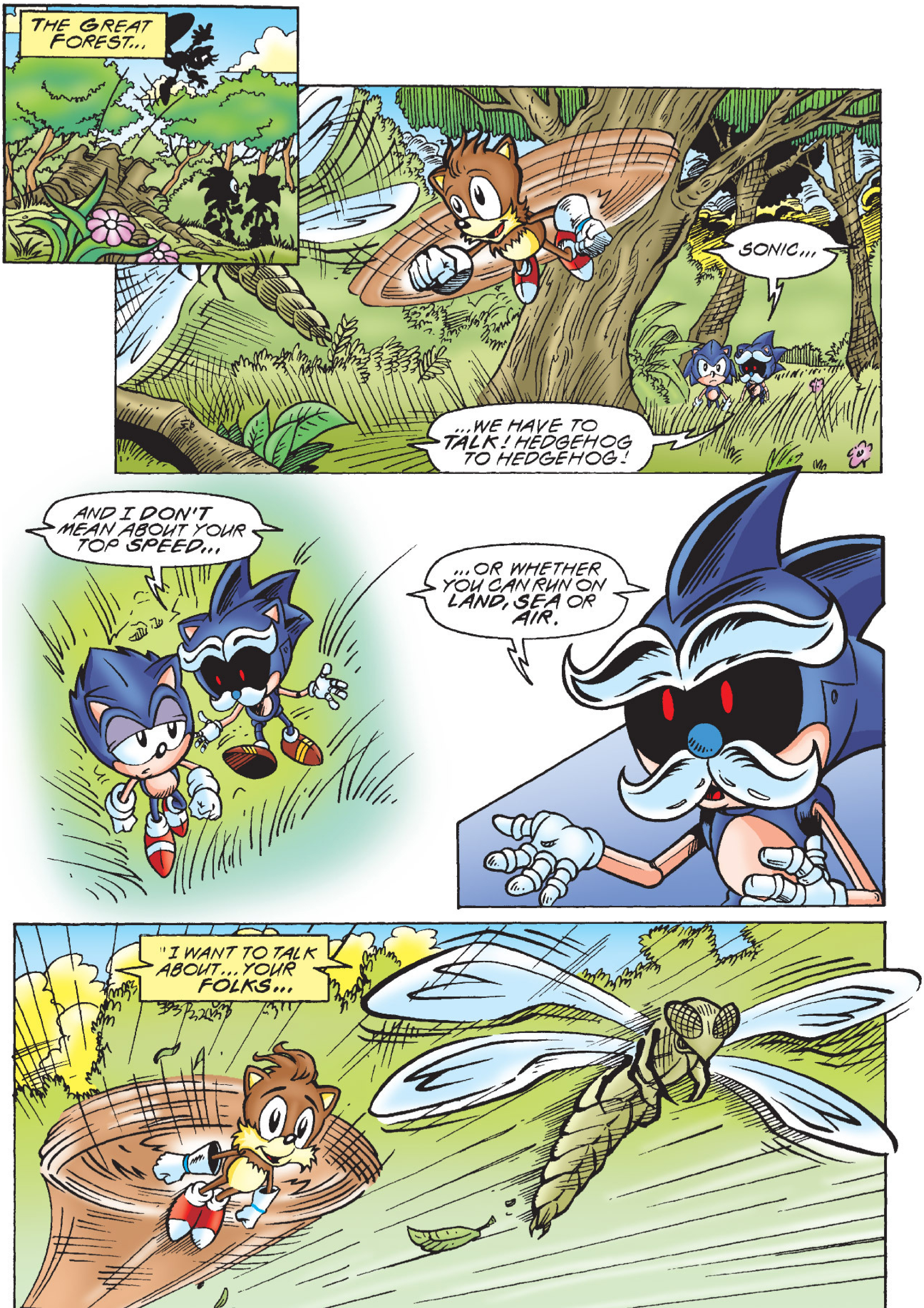


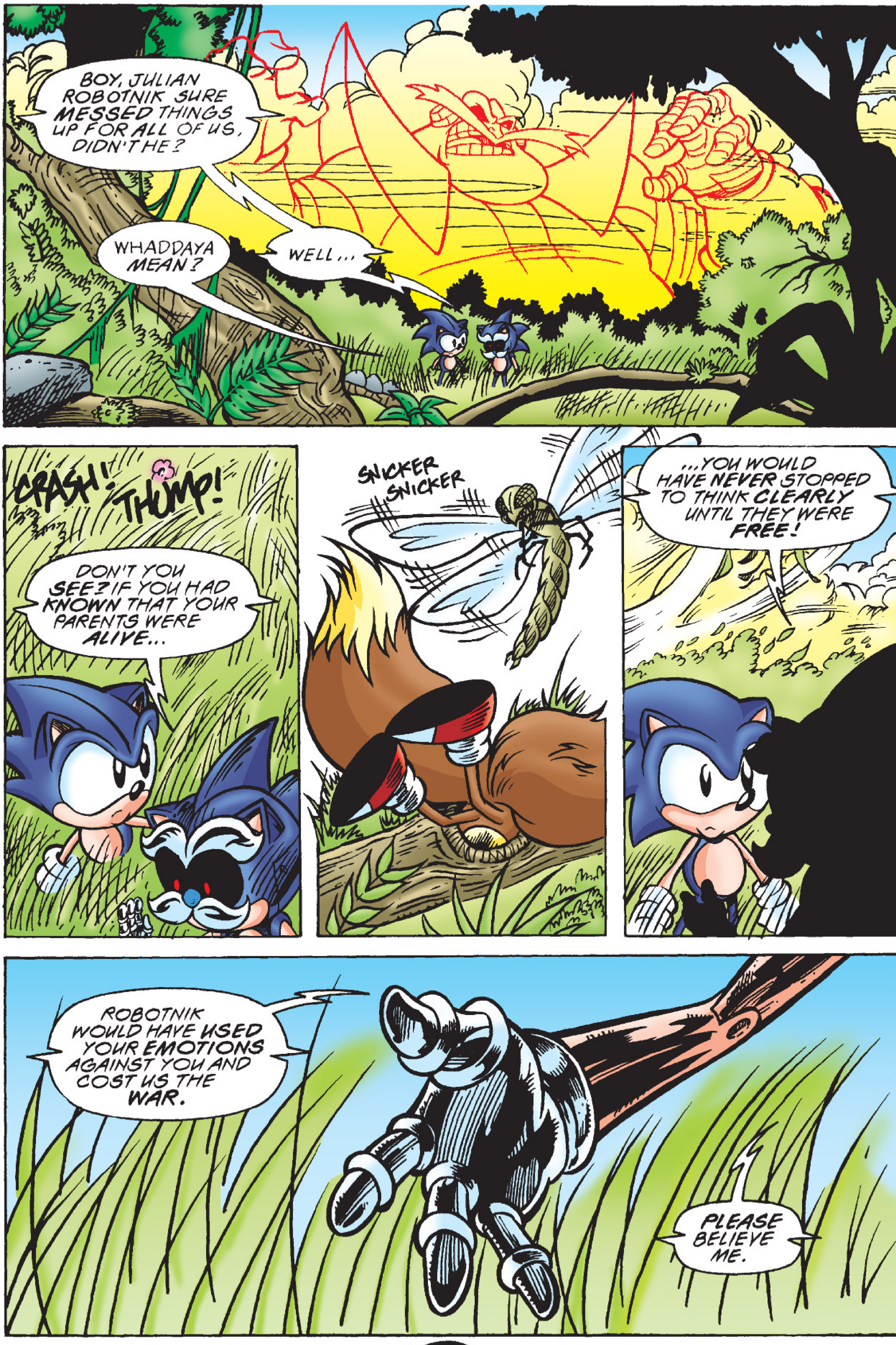
BEFORE HIS UNCLE HAS A CHANCE TO REPLY, SONIC STARTS THE TEST FOR HIM.
AND AS HIS FEET RACE FORWARD, HIS MIND RACES BACKWARDS IN TIME...
TO WHERE?
MOBOTROPOLIS.
TO WHEN?
A FEW HOURS AGO.
HOW?
DON'T ASK KEEP READING...
Yawn
...SINCE I'M FORCED TO SIT ON THIS DUMB COUNCIL, MAYBE I SHOULD PETITION TO RENAME THIS TOWN "DULLSVILLE"!
MEN AT WORK!

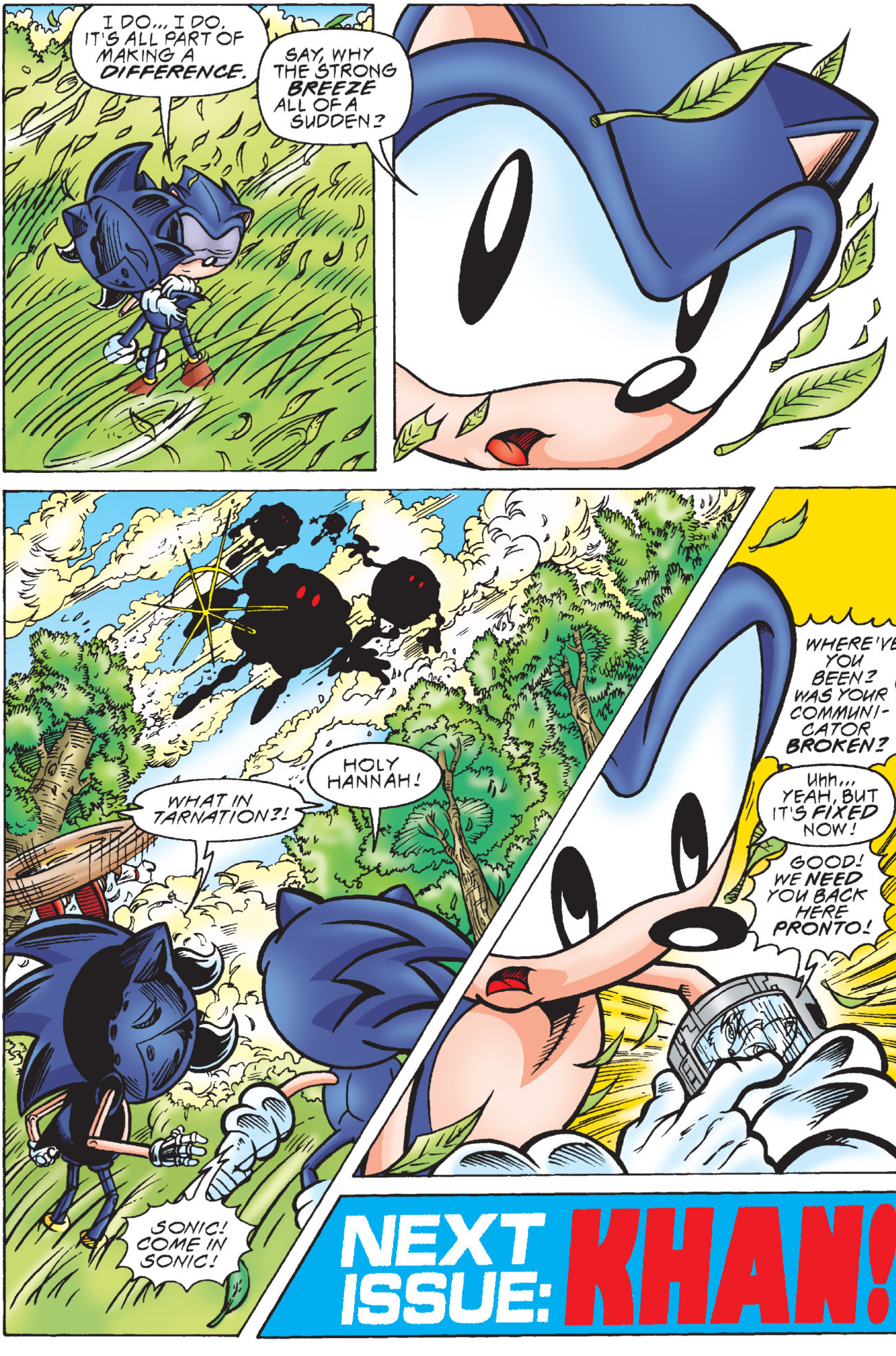

SONIC!
ROSIE! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
"RAARGH! I'M THE EVIL Dr. ROBOTNIK AND I'M GONNA METALIZE YOU!"
RUN!
PLAYING OF COURSE! LOOK AT THEM! THEY'RE OFF ON SOME EXCITING ADVENTURE!
DON'T SAY THAT WORD!
WHAT WORD? ADVENTURE?
I TOLD YOU NOT TO SAY IT!
WHY? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WELL, I HATE TO SAY IT, BUT EVERYTHING STINKS NOW THAT ROBOTNIK IS GONE!
WHAT?! SONIC, ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT?


WELL, AT LEAST WHEN BUTTNIK WAS STILL ALIVE I FELT LIKE I WAS MAKING A DIFFERENCE.
NOW I FEEL LIKE MY HANDS ARE TIED WHILE MY SHOELACES AREN'T!
THAT'S NOT SUCH A GOOD COMBO FOR YOU!
NO, IT'S NOT.
HOW CAN WE REBUILD THE CITY IF WE CAN'T EVEN STOP LONG ENOUGH TO REALIZE THAT EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN PROBLEMS?
WELL, I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL...
YOU DO?
SURE! WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, MY COUSIN & SALLY'S MENTOR JULAYLA USED TO TELL ME ONE IMPORTANT THING...
THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS THE ONE YOU MAKE.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND SORT OF?
THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS THE ONE YOU MAKE... THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS THE ONE YOU MAKE...
YEAH! I THINK I DO!
WHERE TO NOW?
WHERE ELSE? TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE! THANKS, ROSIE!


NOT THE GULAG...
...BUT SOMEWHERE CLOSE ENOUGH TO IT THAT THE REMOTE-CONTROLLED RADIO SIGNAL EMITTED FROM BENEATH SNIVELY'S THUMB...
...HAS A DEFINITE EFFECT!
THE EGGBOTS HAVE ARRIVED!
PROGRAMMED TO TRACK UNIQUE ENERGY SIGNATURES, THEY ROCKET TOWARDS THE HEAVENS TO DO THE BIDDING OF THEIR INCARCERATED MASTER--FIND THE WIZARD, IXIS NAUGUS!


THE GREAT FOREST...
SONIC...
...WE HAVE TO TALK! HEDGEHOG TO HEDGEHOG!
AND I DON'T MEAN ABOUT YOUR TOP SPEED...
...OR WHETHER YOU CAN RUN ON LAND, SEA OR AIR.
"I WANT TO TALK ABOUT... YOUR FOLKS...


BOY, JULIAN ROBOTNIK SURE MESSED THINGS UP FOR ALL OF US, DIDN'T HE?
WHADDAYA MEAN?
WELL...
CRASH! THUMP!
DON'T YOU SEE? IF YOU HAD KNOWN THAT YOUR PARENTS WERE ALIVE...
SNICKER SNICKER
...YOU WOULD HAVE NEVER STOPPED TO THINK CLEARLY UNTIL THEY WERE FREE!
ROBOTNIK WOULD HAVE USED YOUR EMOTIONS AGAINST YOU AND COST US THE WAR.
PLEASE BELIEVE ME.


I DO... I DO. IT'S ALL PART OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE.
SAY, WHY THE STRONG BREEZE ALL OF A SUDDEN?
WHAT IN TARNATION?!
HOLY HANNAH!
SONIC! COME IN SONIC!
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN? WAS YOUR COMMUNI-CATOR BROKEN?
UHH... YEAH, BUT IT'S FIXED NOW!
GOOD! WE NEED YOU BACK HERE PRONTO!
NEXT ISSUE: KHAN!